



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING THAT AN APPROPRIATE INTERIM COMMITTEE OR SUFFICIENT STAFF RESOURCES BE DIRECTED TO STUDY HEALTH CARE AND THE INCREASING COST OF HEALTH INSURANCE.

WHEREAS, rising health care costs are detrimental to stable lifestyles and the well-being of families; and
WHEREAS, health care costs and health insurance rates are increasing above the rate of inflation; and
WHEREAS, rising health insurance costs have a significant impact on the overall personnel and salary budgets of governmental agencies; and

WHEREAS, uncompensated care is a burden on all taxpayers, insurance carriers, and insurance consumers; and

WHEREAS, prescription drug costs may be driven by advertising that extols the virtues of the newest expensive drug; and

WHEREAS, because of the increased cost, a large percentage of employers in Montana no longer offer insurance benefits to their employees and many employees who have insurance have dropped dependents from coverage; and

WHEREAS, all Montanans should have the opportunity to have health insurance coverage, yet 20% are not covered; and

WHEREAS, mandating coverage for certain health care services and providers adds to the cost of insurance; and

WHEREAS, the 58th Legislature will likely have numerous health care and health insurance issues to address; and

WHEREAS, a study of health care and health insurance and how the state might deal with rising costs will provide the members of the 58th Legislature with a head start in handling this complex problem.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to study:

- (1) purchasing pools for individual and small group insurance;
- (2) provider reimbursement rates and cost shifting of health care costs;
- (3) access to affordable prescription drugs;
- (4) strategies to decrease the number of uninsured Montanans;
- (5) factors causing health insurance rates to increase above the rate of inflation;
- (6) the feasibility of recreating the Health Care Advisory Council; and
- (7) any other issues that the committee or the staff deem appropriate and relevant to the problem.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the interim committee or the staff designated to conduct the study seek the participation and input of the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, health care and health insurance consumers, provider organizations, insurers, the Department of Public Health and Human Services, representatives of public employee and private sector health benefit plans, local government representatives, hospitals, and any other appropriate individuals or entities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the study is assigned to staff, any findings or conclusions be presented to and reviewed by an appropriate committee designated by the Legislative Council.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2002.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions, comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 58th Legislature.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within joint resolution,
SJ 0022, originated in the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2001.

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2001.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22

INTRODUCED BY C. CHRISTIAENS, STONINGTON, BOHLINGER, ELLIOTT, GLASER, HARGROVE,
HARRINGTON, MAHLUM, MCCARTHY, NELSON, F. THOMAS, TOOLE, WATERMAN, MILLER

BY REQUEST OF THE SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STANDING COMMITTEE

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